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# CREATION SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES SOCIETY

The Creation Social Science and Humanities Society (CSSHS) was incorporated in Wichita, Kansas, in 1977. The CSSHS is educational, and will promote and disseminate information on the implications of the Biblical creation model of origins for the social sciences and humanities, with emphasis on the development of these disciplines in accordance with the rapidly emerging and increasingly well established natural scientific models of Biblical creation.

The **Quarterly Journal** is directed toward teachers and students of the social sciences and humanities, especially in institutions of higher learning. The CSSHS may also publish books, monographs, and other writings, and sponsor speakers, seminars, and research projects related to its educational purpose.

IRS tax-exempt status was granted December 30, 1977. All contributions are tax-deductible.

**Voting membership** is initially by invitation of the Board of Directors of CSSHS to candidates eligible on the following basis.

a. persons with at least a baccalaureate degree in the social sciences or humanities; or

b. persons 18 years old or over, who have held office in another creation-science organization with beliefs, substantially identical with those contained in the CSSHS **Statement of Belief**, for at least one year immediately prior to applying for membership in the CSSHS; or who have a commitment to our belief and work clearly evidenced by their record of actual involvement. Voting membership dues are \$12 (foreign, \$13 U.S.) per year.

Sustaining membership is open to those who subscribe to the C.S.S.H.S. Statement of Belief. Sustaining membership dues are \$12 (foreign, \$13 U.S.) per year.

Both voting and sustaining memberships include subscription to the **CSSH Quarterly**, and are reckoned as beginning and ending in September.

Non-members may subscribe to the **CSSH Quarterly** at the rate of \$14 (foreign, \$15 U.S.) per year.

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# EDITORIAL

Dear Readers:

The themes that run through the present issue of the Quarterly are quietness, patience, faith and Godly rest in the service of Christian dominion and Christ's Kingdom. The Kingdom is upon us, and our Heavenly Father is active in the world bringing all things into submission to Christ. The work of the Christian is to believe, to see with spiritual eyes and hear with spiritual ears the movements of God bringing all men to the inevitable bowing of the knee and confession of the tongue, "Jesus Christ is Lord."

In our lead article, Mrs. Myers reminds us that there is nothing new under the sun. We should not feel as though a strange and new thing has overtaken us in this generation. The saints have seen all rebellions many times before and, if the Lord tarries, will see them again, since Satan can manage no truly creative thought. All rebellion against God boils down to counterfeit in the end.

Dr. Rushdoony continues the lesson with a beautiful commentary on Mark 4:26-29. The exhortation is to Christian patience, faith and waiting on our Lord. I once heard God's Kingdom described as "a quiet in the land." The Kingdom comes without observation (Luke 17:20-21). Its weapons are spiritual; its administration is gentle, kind, and easy to be entreated. The coming of the Kingdom is viewed with eyes of faith. Fleshly eyes view only the coming of judgment (Luke 17:22-37).

Following Dr. Rushdoony's teaching of Christ's Kingdom coming gently and quietly in contrast to Satan's violent and revolutionary counterfeits, we have a number of articles which provide examples and analysis. In the continuation of her series exploring the thought of Thomas Molnar, Mrs. Myers discusses his analysis of the basic commonality of pantheism and atheism and their inevitable fruition in totalitarian tyranny. By way of contrast, we are then treated to a beautiful example of the Kingdom's manifestation brought by the Holy Spirit to Kievan Russia in the eleventh and twelfth century. The miracle of Kievan Russia provides a beautiful model for Christian revival in our day.

Following two more articles examining contemporary blooming of age-old counterfeits, Mary Tenbrink gives us our Kingdom call to faith and perseverance in two wonderful poems, "Entering through faith's door," and "Living Stone." Let us strive to make known to all "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

May God bless you. Please pray for this ministry.

Paul D. Ackerman

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Creation Sunday — February 7, 1988

The Creation Social Science and Humanities Society joins with the Bible-Science Association and other Christian organizations in declaring February 7, 1988 as Creation Sunday. We encourage our members and friends to use this Sunday for special emphasis on creation in their churches, Sunday School classes, family and individual Bible study, and appropriate activities at this time in Christian schools, youth groups etc. Sermon and Bible study outlines and hand-out materials are available from the Bible-Science Association, 2911 E. 42nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55406.

## Help Enlarge Our Readership By Giving Special Introductory Subscriptions to the *CSSH Quarterly*!

In order to increase our readership, we offer a SPECIAL TENTH ANNIVERSARY INTRODUCTORY SUBSCRIPTION to the *CSSH Quarterly*. It is open to our members and subscribers for gift subscriptions to Vol. X (through September 1988). It does NOT apply to renewals or first-time membership/subscriptions by non-members, but exclusively to gift subscriptions sent in by our present members or subscribers.

The cost is only \$5.00 (U.S.) for addresses in the U.S.A. and Canada. For addresses elsewhere, add \$2.00 each.

We encourage especially our long-time members to use this opportunity to introduce our work to others of like interests and convictions. We also suggest that you enter a gift subscription to a Christian university or college library. Our experience has been that recipients of gift subscriptions in these categories continue to subscribe "on their own" once familiar with our work.



# Paganism-Humanism, Old and New

*Ellen Myers*

The fundamental concepts of human thought are surprisingly similar and repetitive throughout the history of philosophy and religion. What may seem new to our own generation reveals itself as old upon historical examination, or rather as a fresh branch from an ancient root. Thus both faith in the God of the Bible and paganism-humanism, that is, faith in man himself as ruler of reality, go back to man's creation and fall.

At times a description of a historical period will immediately allow comparisons with similar developments now. So it is with the first four to five hundred years of Christianity in the pagan-humanist world of antiquity and Christianity today. On the pagan-humanist side, then as now unbelievers prided themselves in their reason or "right reason" and relied on it as their ultimate authority. Then as now, paganism-humanism believed that reality was determined by natural laws or forces (deified in polytheism) and also by sheer coincidence or chance. Therefore, then as now paganism-humanism produced two main co-existing or alternating currents of thought, atheist-skeptical rationalism and pantheist-mystical irrationalism. Then as now, paganism-humanism considered a one-world state its solution to the ills of mankind and was essentially collectivistic and elitist in its social outlook.

Finally, then as now biblical Christian thought began with the personal, Triune, transcendent God as Creator and hence sovereign Ruler and Sustainer of all that is. Paganism-humanism on the other hand held to an eternally impersonal, self-existing universe of matter in motion. Thus biblical creation is the ultimate issue separating the two faiths of mankind throughout history. That Christians do battle over this issue today is the most remarkable parallel between our own time and the first four to five centuries A.D.

Let us now consider that period in detail. The Roman emperor Augustus (63 B.C.-14 A.D.) seemed to have solved the problem of political stability in the consolidated Roman empire after a century of upheaval. The philosophy of the state was largely built upon the views of Cicero (106-43 B.C.), who combined reliance on man's "right reason" with practical utilitarianism. He summarized the duties of public office as (1) maintaining the rights of property; (2) abstaining from burdensome taxation; (3) ensuring to every one an abundance of the necessities of life; and (4) absence of greed or corruption in public officials. These principles have remained the staples of Western statecraft till today, even though maintaining a balance between the

first three has proven impossible in the long run. Furthermore, the venality of public officials is and always has been a fact in politics recognized by Christians as evidence and penalty of fallen man's sinfulness. "Ensuring to every one an abundance of the necessities of life" could come straight from the mouth of modern welfare state defenders, and it must eventually play havoc with taxation and thus property just as it did in imperial Rome.

Cicero held a middle-of-the-road position about religion whereas his contemporary Lucretius stood for extreme atheism-rationalism. Both believed in human reason as sufficient to guide man. Cicero has been more appealing to posterity because he sought to identify practical utility with morality, saying that nothing could be useful that was not also honest. While Lucretius, a true "secular" humanist, rejected the gods of paganism and anything supernatural as sheer superstition, Cicero rendered them lip service including ceremonies and recourse to divination, in part to identify with Roman tradition.

Along with its rationalism Augustan Rome also abounded with Oriental mystery cults where men sought inner unity with the gods or with the pantheistic divinity of the universe. This is the irrational or anti-rational current of paganism-humanism. The reader can draw his own parallels between these trends in antiquity and similar ones today such as "rationalist" positivism and relativism, and "irrationalist" occultism and "new age" ideas. There was one major difference: pagan-humanist antiquity placed great value upon virtues, especially fortitude under adversity, while its modern counterpart sneers at virtue and heroism.

With regard to the state, the Roman empire under Augustus and the "good" emperors succeeding him ( Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius) may be considered the pagan-humanist ideal society. It combined security and order with relative affluence and liberty for Roman citizens. Along with this stability went distrust or even prevention of all things new, including technical inventions. The story is told of a man who invented a flexible or shatter-proof glass. The emperor Tiberius (Augustus' immediate successor) had him beheaded because such an invention would have brought about the collapse of all existing values in gold, that is, totally upset the empire's economic and hence political balance. Similar stagnation has marked all centrally governed collectivist states throughout history. Paganism-humanism has never solved the problem of the individual versus the state even in principle because it has no real place for individuals not aspiring to fame and power. It is not surprising that as paganism-humanism again predominates today collectivism also again prevails so widely.

Christianity alone resisted pagan-humanist society and was not deceived by its outward peace. Because it preaches individual salvation in Christ, it has solved the individual-state problem in principle and made room for individual worth and creativity. It has been rightly said that a society of law with individual liberty is but a political reading of the Bible.



Under the "good" Roman emperors jurisprudence and education for citizenship through the "liberal arts," pagan-style, flourished, and they endured for nearly two millennia. Christian learning was largely permeated with their precepts, and at times even sought purposely integration with them. That our own age is wide open to paganism-humanism is shown by the return to the prominent thinkers of classical antiquity advocated by prominent educators in neo-conservative and nominally Christian circles today. Christians should know and understand from history that "integration" of biblical Christianity with paganism-humanism on an equal basis is impossible and can only emasculate Christianity, robbing the world of the healing and fruitfulness it alone can offer.

The foundation of such "integrationist" attempts has ever been the idea of a supposed "natural law" to which all rational men can agree. The unstated presupposition behind this notion is that once men see and agree to what is lawful ("good"), they will act accordingly. This belief denies that man is fallen and sinful but rather contends that he is naturally "good" and needs only rational persuasion to do what is right. Let there only be "dialogue" between reasonable men and all will be well! Christianity can never agree to this idea because it knows that man is fallen and hence by nature rebellious against the only good that really is, namely, God Himself. Christianity also understands that reason cannot by itself infallibly determine truth and settle disputes. The regeneration of fallen man's naturally rebellious, self-worshipping will is the prerequisite for right human thought, that is, reason in conformity with God's will and work. Since man cannot regenerate himself, God alone must regenerate him and He alone can and must be the starting point for man's thought and action.

Already by the second century A.D. Rome began to decline and fall into increasing anarchy compounded by recurrent wars against its external enemies. As conditions became increasingly chaotic, Christians began to predict the imminent end of the world. For example, in the third century A.D. Cyprian wrote that Scripture prophecies of the end time were being fulfilled in view of changes in climate, exhaustion of natural resources, and the universal deterioration of political life, public justice, the arts, human relations and discipline in personal conduct. He also referred to a deadly plague then ravaging the empire as a sign of the end. Similar predictions of the end of this age and Christ's Coming Again have marked successive historical periods of great upheaval, last but not least today. As we note these crises and attendant preoccupation with biblical prophecy among Christians, we must cling to our Lord's own sober command to be faithful servants who "occupy till He comes."

In 313 A.D. the first Christian emperor, Constantine, accorded recognition and toleration to Christians in the Edict of Milan. This event introduced the problem of how to exercise Christian political power. The church as an institution became powerful and politicized, and biblically pure Christianity was endangered by political ambition and interference. The tension between Christianity, church and state grew

during the conflicts over important heresies, especially Arianism (which ended with the victory of biblical orthodoxy defended by the great Athanasius). History shows that though Christianity eventually broke the mold of the Roman state of classical antiquity and "Caesaropapism" (the unity of church and state), the problems of Christian government, even with separation of church and state, persist to this day.

While Christianity was gradually spreading throughout the Roman empire during the first five centuries A.D., it was slow to produce a comprehensive, explicit statement of its beliefs over against paganism-humanism. In this task the early church fathers contributed valuable insights and accomplished the crucial task of sifting heresies from biblical orthodoxy. However, in exposing the errors of paganism-humanism the most important progress was made by Augustine (354-430 A.D.). All Christendom afterwards has benefited from the intellectual wealth of his many writings. Augustine recognized that the starting point of Christian-biblical philosophy is the personal Trinity and creation of all things whatever by it out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). In creation the order and movements of all created entities in the universe have their beginning.

It was Augustine who introduced through his *Confessions* what we call today individual psychology/introspection; he condemned, of course, as pagans-humanists do not, in himself that which was not in conformity with Christ. It was Augustine who in his *City of God* introduced the concept of linear history from creation to the last judgment, over against pagan-humanist cyclical history and endowing history with meaning and purpose in God's creative design. It was Augustine who saw the kingdom of God on earth as a society regenerated by the acceptance of Christian truth. It was Augustine who against Pelagius upheld the necessity for God's grace in man's salvation. It was Augustine who worked out the relationship of faith and reason in that faith precedes reason so that rational understanding in turn becomes the reward of faith. By doing so Augustine exposed the great illusion of paganism-humanism in classical antiquity and now. This illusion, in Charles Norris Cochrane's words, was the supposition that while opinion (roughly equivalent to 'faith') was subjective, reason contained within itself the power to transcend the limitations of mere subjectivity and to apprehend 'objective' truth. This illusion is still the chief content of pagan-humanist attacks upon the Christian-biblical faith today. Only few humanists today understand that all statements about reality are based on prior beliefs or presuppositions (that is, faith). Pagans-humanists begin to reason from within the created universe (for them, eternally self-existing and "evolving"). Augustine, on the contrary, did not reason from the world to God but began with God, an epistemology neglected by Christian intellectual leaders until our own time when again nothing less than this starting point will suffice.

Augustine gave value to individual human personality as free from the twin evils of determination by fate and/or chance in the pagan-humanist closed universe. He denied that the devil or evil were independent of God but called them mere parasites upon God's goodness. He denied



that the body as such or matter is evil, a Manichean heresy often falsely attributed to biblical Christianity. He saw Christ as the rock or foundation for a new physics, a new ethic, and a new logic. Ideologies not founded upon Christ he called the "prostitution of mind to its own fancies" (*fantastica fornicatio*). In it he correctly recognized the origin of all efforts to build utopian systems, societies and institutions of man's own making. Man must invent falsehoods (such as evolutionism or the myth of the natural goodness of man) to bridge the abyss between his fancies and actual created reality.

Augustine rejected both academic skepticism and idealist subjectivism. Since God as Creator is the Guarantor of reality, things are really "there" by virtue of creation and providence, and there is certainty of knowledge when God communicates His own perfect knowledge to His people. This certainty in and by God also forbids idealist-subjectivist, mystic speculation for its own sake. For Augustine all creatures have their own created identities with their own proper motions and purposes by virtue of God's creation. Man must think God's thoughts after Him to interact with his fellow creatures fruitfully and exercise proper dominion over them as God's vice-regent. Augustine sums up this principle briefly and beautifully: "The will of God is the necessity of things." The standard of good and evil is also set by God's character and will/word. Man must "realize himself" in accordance therewith. When attempting to do so in neglect or conscious opposition to God and His universe, that is, against true reality, he can only destroy himself. Hence classical paganism-humanism was doomed to defeat, as is its modern counterpart.

Augustine believed that God's kingdom rules here and now in the church as the faithful obedience to Christ by His people. He did not believe that the evils of society, where the saints and the enemies of Christ must dwell together, can be overcome by the saints' withdrawal from the world, nor by escape into primitivism, but only by their full exercise of authority in God, including fully exposing the errors of pagan-humanist unbelief. "To this task," Charles Norris Cochrane writes, "the Christian militiaman is impelled by the conviction that, as Christian truth alone is genuinely salutary, its immediate acceptance is of the highest possible moment to the welfare of the race." While not all views of Augustine (or of any individual Christian) are true in the light of Scripture and reality (which two absolutely and totally coincide), his insights cited above served his own and many generations of believers to our day. No more powerful weapon than belief in biblical creation has ever been forged against paganism-humanism, then and now.

Note: This paper is deeply indebted to Charles Norris Cochrane's great work *Christianity and Classical Culture* (Oxford University Press, 1944), which deserves the widest possible reading.

# "First the Blade"

Rousas John Rushdoony

One of the very important and much neglected verses of Scripture is Mark 4:28: "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself: first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Our Lord tells us (Mark 4:26-29) that the Kingdom of God, as it develops in history, has a necessary growth and development. No more than we can plant grain and then expect the harvest at once, can we expect quick or immediate results in the growth of God's Kingdom. If we plant grain, we must cultivate it, often water it, tend to the field, and, only after much labor, reap a harvest. To expect otherwise is stupidity and foolishness, whether in farming or in the work of the Kingdom. In fact, our Lord describes quick growth as false (Matt. 13:5-6, 20-21).

The expectations of most people nowadays run contrary to our Lord's words. They demand immediate results, and then wonder why their harvests never come.

Within the church, this demand for immediate and spectacular results is commonplace. We need to remember that in church history sometimes the most successful preachers over the centuries have been heretics and compromisers. Carl E. Braaten has rightly observed, "John Tetzel was surely a popular preacher. He told people what they wanted to hear and sold people what they wanted to get. He was a preacher of indulgences, and lots of peoples swarmed to hear him and bought what he had to offer." (*Currents in Theology and Missions*, vol. 14, no. 2, April 1987, p. 111 f.) Today, even the Catholic Encyclopedia speaks of Tetzel's "unwarranted theological views." However, we need not go back to Tetzel, Today preachers of all sorts, and laymen too, believe in and demand of God instant results: sow the seed and stand back while the harvest pops up at once! As a result, such men often do better at growing weeds than grain.

This mentality is common in all circles, modernist and fundamentalist, socialist and conservative. During the 1930s, I recall spending a futile dinner hour trying to persuade a fellow student out of quitting his university training. A passionate and devout leftist, he was convinced that, very shortly, the forces of international fascism would conquer the world. It was therefore necessary to go underground with the party of world revolution and work for world liberation. He was totally convinced that, once the forces of world fascism were broken, peace and plenty would flourish from pole to pole and sea to shining sea. I believe that on that occasion I first made serious use of Mark 4:28, but it was futile.

In the 1960s, great numbers of students all over the world fell victim to the same wild delusion. They believed that, with a little action, the



full ear of corn could be reaped at once. One group held that only the reactionaries prevented the immediate dawn of an automated, work-free, and war-free world. When a reporter asked one girl in the group how a work free world could produce food, she answered with haughty contempt, "Food IS!" The student movement commanded superior minds academically, but it lacked any sense of historical development and growth. God can produce instantaneous results. He created all things out of nothing. But the Kingdom of God in history moves, our Lord tells us, in a different way, even as "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself: first the blade, then the ear after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4:28).

In the past ten years, I have been involved in many court trials defending the freedom of the church, the Christian School, home schools and families. It regularly amazes and appalls me that so many Christians, before they have fought a court case or voted (so many still do not vote), are ready to give up hope or to think of extreme measures and flight. (In this, they resemble the students of the 1960s.) Only yesterday I talked with a fine veteran of Viet Nam whose pastor sees no alternative to total obedience to the state except revolution; since he opposes revolution, he insists on total obedience as the Christian duty. He overlooks the vast realm in between, i.e., voting, pressure on legislatures, the education of Bible believers (of whom 50% do not vote), and so on.

It is important to recognize that this inability to see the necessity of growth is a modern failing, and also to see its source. The church fathers by and large tended to neglect Mark 4:28, but Calvin noted that the parable has as its purpose to make us diligent and patient "because the fruit of... labour does not immediately appear."

It was the Enlightenment and Romanticism which produced the new mentality. According to Scripture, man's problem is himself, he is a sinner. His original sin is his desire for autonomy, to be his own god and law, determining good and evil for himself (Gen. 3:5). However, there is nothing man wants less to face than the fact that, whatever other problems he has, he, his own nature, is his main problem. In fact, man rejects radically and totally the idea that God's indictment of him is correct. He may approve of the motto, "In God we trust," but he lives in terms of the premise, "In myself I trust."

The more man develops in his sin, in his evil will-to-be-god, the more he believes that his own fiat word can make reality. If statist man says, Let there be prosperity, there should be prosperity. If he says, Let poverty, hatred, and oppression be abolished, these things should disappear.

But, the more he pursues this course as god and creator, the more the evils around him increase. As James tells us, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (James 4:1). Men create evils and then blame God, their environment, and other men for them.

How many politicians are ready to say, "We, the people, are responsible for the mess we are in. We want something for nothing.

We want to eat our cake and have it too. We have despised God's laws concerning debt, and much, much more, and we deserve the judgment God is bringing upon us."

Man himself is the primary problem, and man insists that the blame must be laid on someone or something else. As a result, his problem is compounded.

The Enlightenment and Romanticism deny the Biblical answer. According to the Enlightenment, man's Reason is the solution to the problem, whereas Romanticism locates the answer in man's will. In either case, man is the answer, not the problem.

Such thinking placed the modern age (in Europe, after c.1660 especially) in radical disagreement with orthodox Christianity. The modern era exalts man and his needs, and it is at total war against the faith that declares man to be a sinner. The epitome of a God-centered faith is the Westminster Shorter Catechism's opening statement, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever."

The logic of such man-centered thinking in the Enlightenment and Romanticism led to Revolution. John Locke, after Aristotle, insisted that man's mind and being is a moral blank, neutral to good and evil. The premise of modern education is Locke's assumption; education then becomes the conditioning of the morally blank child.

But what about adults who are no longer morally blank but have been conditioned into an evil outlook by Christianity, family and capitalism? (This, for modern thinkers, is the great trinity of evil, Christianity, the family, and capitalism.) How are these peoples and cultures who have been conditioned by evil going to be changed? How can they be dealt with?

Revolution is held to provide the answer. Revolution is seen as personal and cultural shock therapy. We should not be surprised that psychiatrists turned for a time to electro-shock therapy: it is a form of psychological revolution. All old patterns are supposedly destroyed in order to clear the mind of past beliefs and habits, then the new, revolutionary changes can be instilled. Such a "therapy" has proven to be a dramatic failure; the moral nature of the man remains. It is not that which comes from outside which pollutes and warps a man but that which comes from within.

Political revolutions rest on the simple-minded belief in shock therapy. The French and Russian revolutions, and the Spanish and other revolutions, have all believed that destruction will free man from the chains of bondage, but all these revolutions have only enslaved man all the more. The more modern the revolution, the more destructive and vicious it becomes. The Russian Revolution murdered priests wholesale, worked to destroy the family, and confiscated property. The murder of priests became even more savage and intense in the Spanish Revolution.

The belief has been that the murder of man's past is his liberation into a glorious future. The results have been hell on earth, but the revolutionists never blame themselves for it. It is rather the lingering



mentality of the past which is to blame. Gorbachev, to "reform" the Soviet Union, has intensified the war against Christianity.

Modern man refuses to be earth-bound. The proud American boast after the first space flight showed an astronaut as a newly born baby, and his umbilical cord tying him to earth being cut. Man now was supposedly transcending the earth to enter into a "space age" of freedom. With this new, god-like status, man, some held, would guide his own evolution, clone himself, and overcome space, time, and death.

Is it any wonder that even churchmen have neglected Mark 4:28? Our Lord is very clear the pattern of the Kingdom of God is like that of the earth which bringeth forth fruit of itself. There is an order and a progression from the seed, to the first green shoot to emerge, to the cultivated growth, and finally the harvest. Both time and work are essential.

I still recall my pity and revulsion for a prominent American pastor who, after World War II, wanted people to spend their time praying for a speedy Second Coming of Christ. He was arrogantly contemptuous of all Kingdom building as wasteful of time and money. He agreed with another prominent preacher who dismissed all efforts at Christian Kingdom action as "polishing brass on a sinking ship." Such men do not preach on Mark 4:28.

I recall also, sadly, a very fine man, a very wealthy man, who called me to see him not too long before his death. His family and the firm's director were now fully in charge of all his wealth. About seven years earlier, I had suggested to him that, if he had as his intention turning America around to a better direction, starting Christian Schools across the country would do it. He rejected my answer sharply. Now, near death, he called me in to say that if he had spent the millions he did seeking a "quick victory" on Christian Schools instead, the country would indeed be different.

That man was the antithesis of everything revolutionary. He had funded generously a number of anti-Communist causes. He loved deeply the more simple America he had known in his youth. He loved the one-room schoolhouse of his midwestern youth, and the country church with its kindly, neighborly believers in the old-time religion. He was a simple, honest, hard-working, old-fashioned American Christian.

At the same time, although he did not know it, and would have been outraged at the suggestion, he was a revolutionist. However much old-fashioned, he had something in common with all revolutionaries, namely, the hunger for and the belief in a "quick victory."

Millions of American conservatives demonstrated, shortly after Reagan's election in 1980 that they too were believers in the myth of victory by revolution. They acted as though the millennium had arrived with Reagan's victory! Conservative political action groups saw an alarming decline in monetary contributions. Reagan was elected, the war was over, the troops were leaving to resume life as usual in their now peaceable kingdom.

The mentality of instant results is all around us. It is the mentality of the modern age, and of revolution. It is the belief that the problem is

not ourselves but something outside of us which an election, revolution, money, education, or some other like measure can alter tomorrow. Meanwhile, we ourselves see no need for change where we are concerned! We can maintain our modern lifestyle and make God happy with a few dollars tossed into an offering plate.

But God says to us, as His prophet Nathan said to King David, a better man than all of us, "Thou art the man" (II Samuel 12:7). The turn-around begins with us. Then, we work in terms of God's order on earth for His Kingdom: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

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# Thomas Molnar: A Christian Scholar for Our Time

Ellen Myers

## Part II: The Confluence of Pantheist and Atheist Utopianism

In his masterful *Utopia, The Perennial Heresy* Thomas Molnar begins by pointing out that utopian thinkers throughout history have never been content with mere mending or improving of that which falls short of perfection in existing reality and is on biblical Christian premises the result of man's fall into sin. A fallen world in which God's people must humbly work out their salvation in moment by moment trusting, faithful dependence upon God and His grace and mercy is intolerable to the proud utopian who thinks he knows (better than God) what the world ought to be like. Hence "utopian thinkers fully deserve to be called 'radical' because their reconstruction of society and man demands total re-thinking about God and creation."<sup>1</sup>

Utopians demand absolute perfection and purity in society, a seemingly attractive trait until we realize that their goal and "perhaps [their] main motivation" is an unnatural, anti-human perfection and purity of their own invention which "would so de-nature man that it would have to be enforced."<sup>2</sup> This accounts for the totalitarian suppression of any and all "dissidents" once a utopian movement comes to power. Modern Communism with its purist demand for the totally "classless society," and Nazism obsessed with its delusion of evolutionist-Darwinist "racial purity" are classic examples.

Molnar rightly emphasizes that "Christianity . . . taught that man transforms the world for the glory of God and for his own contentment"<sup>3</sup> In the biblical Christian framework each individual man and woman is a unique person, and responsible to God as His steward entrusted by virtue of man's original creation with dominion over God's handiwork. Marx, on the other hand,

asserted that work . . . was not an activity of man as a subject, but an action of nature manifesting itself through man. In fact, Marxist man is not a subject at all, but the *locus* (scene) of objective natural forces. In his *Nationalökonomie und Philosophie*, Marx contended that man creates objects because the objects create him, because, according to his origin, he himself is nature.<sup>4</sup>

Here is a flagrant instance of monism (nothing exists outside the universe; there is no transcendent Creator God), atheist-materialist as it happens yet quite compatible with pantheist-idealist "religious"

monism in its denial of man's meaningful personhood. Hegel also considered man a mere *locus* of the activity of the universal World Spirit. Another monist denying real meaning to individual man was the famous Russian symbolist author Andrei Belyi (1880-1934). A devotee of a gnostic-pantheist-occult branch of theosophy known as "anthroposophy," he believed that man is merely the meeting place of "forces" and "intelligences" which may even think their thoughts in his brain, appearing to him as "self-thinking thoughts."<sup>5</sup> Significantly Belyi longed for an apocalyptic new world which would replace the old Russia, and he considered himself a good Communist citizen when he died. Another example of the monistic reduction of man to a *locus* of outside forces is the behaviorism of B. F. Skinner, who described the utopian new society of behaviorism in his notorious *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*. Here Skinner baldly agreed with C. S. Lewis that autonomous man, "the man defended by the literatures of freedom and dignity," was being abolished in the Skinnerian world, but that "His abolition has long been overdue . . . To man qua man we readily say good riddance . . ."<sup>6</sup> This book appeared four years after Molnar's *Utopia*, fully confirming Molnar's thesis of the unnaturalness to man, and hence totalitarian enforcement policy, of social-political utopianism.

Another essential feature of utopian thought is its globalism. Modern transportation and communications have greatly accelerated and reinforced the utopian assumption that we are about to see "a global melting pot to which each man brings his own unique contribution and receives the imprint of communal consciousness."<sup>7</sup> It is not an entirely new assumption, as it was already held by the famous and prolific French feminist novelist George Sand (Aurore Dupin, Baroness Dudevant, 1804-1876), "Friend and patron of the French utopian socialists,"<sup>8</sup> and by the Communist Manifesto of 1848. Globalism is, of course, compatible with both communist internationalism and pantheist-mystical dreams about the "coalescence of all mankind" as the next evolutionary stage. Both envision a one-world government to enforce the "new order," the coming higher stage of history as emergent evolution. It can be made to sound quite heroic and attractive, as Molnar shows in quoting the Soviet philosopher A. Bogdanov:

The third main stage in history is that of the collective self-sufficient economy and the fusion of personal lives into one colossal whole, harmonious in the relations of its parts, systematically grouping all elements for one common struggle — the struggle against the endless spontaneity of nature. . . . It demands the forces not of man but of mankind — and only in working at this task does mankind as such emerge.<sup>9</sup>

Bogdanov was among the small faction of Russian communists which included Lenin's Commissar of Education Anatoly Lunacharsky and, for a while, the famous writer Maxim Gorky and which called itself the "god-builders." The "god" they wished to build was socialist mankind. In 1908 Gorky wrote an entire book, *Confession*, on this theme, but left off "god-building" pursuant to Lenin's displeasure with any notion of "god." However, Molnar perceptively points out that utopian perfec-

tionism in general "is actually a conscious and concentrated form of self-divinization. . . . In fact, mankind and nature ascend the path of progress together until the cosmos will be indistinguishable from God."<sup>10</sup> Again we see the fundamental agreement, even sameness, between atheist and pantheist world views, regarding belief in the essential divinity of mankind and the cosmos as a whole. Molnar draws upon his prodigious research of French literature and philosophy to show us yet another example of an ostensibly agnostic utopian thinker with notions of human divinity, Ernest Renan (1823-1892). Renan is best known for his efforts to present Jesus Christ as a mere man, and the gospels as historically false. Yet for all that, Renan too had a religion and looked forward to a god:

In *Caliban*, Renan expressed the opinion that in the indeterminable future everything will become one single center of consciousness in which all human beings will participate . . . In the same way as mankind has emerged from animality, Renan continues, the divinity will emerge from mankind. In their turn, the superhuman gods will become one single god.<sup>11</sup>

Renan's evolutionist belief in the emergence of man from animality is a common modern denominator of both pantheist "religious" and agnostic-atheist "secular rationalist" utopianism. This belief is shared by the French Jesuit priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (d.1955), a pantheist-religious thinker who has become the "patron saint" of the Western "New Age" movement of the 1980s, and by the atheist, stridently anti-Christian Julian Huxley (grandson of T.H. Huxley, "Darwin's Bulldog"). Huxley wrote a preface to Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man* in which he stated that "the incipient development of mankind into a single psycho-social unit, with a single noosystem, or common pool of thought, is providing the evolutionary process with the rudiments of a head."<sup>12</sup> Molnar is forthright in his condemnation of Teilhard de Chardin (whose writings were forbidden by the Catholic Church to be disseminated, a prohibition ignored by the apostate Jesuit's adoring followers):

Teilhard de Chardin [rendered the idea of God meaningless] by ingeniously combining contemporary admiration for science, socialism and irrationality with their respective vocabularies. The result, condemned by every line of the Old and New Testament, is the very content of the original sin . . . His public forgets . . . that man cannot step out of the human condition and that no "universal mind" is now being manufactured simply because science has permitted the building of nuclear bombs, spaceships and electronic computers.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, Molnar states, "[Teilhard's] terminology, which mixes archaeology, sociology, biology, astronomy and a vulgarized theology, can, in fact, be translated at every turn into the language of collectivism and of totalitarian policies."<sup>14</sup> Molnar fully understands what is at stake in this unified emergent evolutionist, radically anti-biblical drive for power:

If only matter and its evolutionary forms exist, then man, too, is



only matter . . . If he is not a reflection of the divine being, then he is in no sense sacred and final, and new forms of evolution may supersede him. . . . Whether explained through Teilhard de Chardin or the Russian and Chinese communists, the solution is this: Man as we have known him is now being overcome by the new evolutionary form. This is not a new species, but *coalesced mankind*. . . .

Both Teilhard de Chardin and the Communists speak of an indefinite evolution . . . Yet, the imagination of the one and the efforts of the others go only as far as "totalized" or totalitarian society . . . everything else is figure of style or outright fuzziness.<sup>15</sup>

Because the perennial ideal of utopians is a radically "new" age and mankind in which all shall be one, utopians are egalitarian to the core. Hence they "are necessarily antagonistic to money and all its functions (trade, savings, investment) because possession of money allows for individual choice which, in turn, confuses centralized planning."<sup>16</sup> Molnar cites J.K. Galbraith's well-known and influential book *The Affluent Society* and Thomas More's *Utopia* as examples of such egalitarian utopian thinking. Utopians must also do away with individualized education and upbringing of children, which entails their desire to remove children from the care of their parents and, indeed, their implied or open hostility towards the family. This hostility can be observed in all socialistic systems, especially Marxism. For an invaluable confirmation of this fact, see Igor Shafarevich's comprehensive study, *The Socialist Phenomenon*, in which he defines the contours of socialism as (1) abolition of private property; (2) abolition of the family; (3) abolition of religion, especially Christianity; and (4) communality or equality.<sup>17</sup> Shafarevich refers to certain medieval heretical movements, such as the English Ranters or the German Anabaptists under Thomas Muenzer, also discussed by Molnar, and he shows that they were not only religious heretics but also socialist revolutionists in their leveling egalitarianism. The work of Molnar and Shafarevich has been fully confirmed and indeed anticipated by the British historian Norman Cohn in his authoritative study *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, which contains extensive excerpts from the writings of leading Ranters.<sup>18</sup> Cohn also recognized and pointed out the ideological and practical affinity between these movements and modern Nazism and Communism. The careful and thorough scholarly research of Cohn, Molnar and Shafarevich leaves no doubt but that anti-Christian pantheist utopianism of past history and in today's "new age" movement, and anti-Christian atheist and socialist utopianism are not opponents but merely two sides of the same coin. This fact is also evident from the egalitarian goals and methods shared by the utopian novels of past and present, such as Thomas More's *Utopia*, Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*, "The Law of Freedom" by Gerrard Winstanley, the numerous philosophical utopian novels written during the Enlightenment, socialist utopias like Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, and others.<sup>19</sup>

Let us turn to an instance of actual cooperation between religious pantheists, assorted mystics, and militant socialists and Marxists. In the

1890s and 1900s there existed in London a far-flung, loosely connected network of groups and individuals calling itself the "New Life" movement. It included George Bernard Shaw, the witty author, a "vitalist" pantheist and socialist; Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the founder of modern theosophy, and her lieutenant and successor Annie Besant, a pioneer of birth control; H. M. Hyndman, a prominent British Marxist; Ermund Gurney, founder of the society for Psychical Research (spiritist); Havelock Ellis, the famous sexologist; and leaders of the socialist Fabian Society and the Independent Labour Party. One of the movement's branches was the Fellowship of the New Life, founded in 1882, of which Ramsay MacDonald, the future labour prime minister, was secretary for ten years. This Fellowship in turn was closely linked with the Brotherhood Church, whose pastor John C. Kenworthy helped promote communes formed by the followers of the Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. Tolstoy was a member of the movement. His most famous disciple was none other than Mohandas K. Gandhi, a revered personality among adherents of the "New Age" movement now.<sup>20</sup> Obviously religion, pantheism, occultism, or atheism was not at issue between supporters of the "New Life" movement. The Brotherhood Church even cooperated in facilitating the 1907 conference of the Russian Social Democrat (Communist) Party. When this conference found itself ousted from Copenhagen by the Swedish police, the delegates

eventually straggled across to London. Here Ramsay MacDonald, the British socialist leader, was of some help to them; he managed to obtain the use of the Brotherhood Church in Whitechapel in the east end of London. It belonged to a severe religious sect known as the Christian Socialists, and the agreement was that the Russians should hold their meetings in this odd place for a period of three days. Three weeks later the Christian Socialists were still pleading with their guests to leave the building just long enough for them to get in for their Sunday prayer meeting.<sup>21</sup>

This instance of Communist "takeover" should be a warning to religious utopians collaborating with them, but will almost certainly not deter them as they overlook even the bloody record of Communism wherever it has "taken over" since 1917.

Molnar points to a far deeper lesson missed by socialist utopians, the invincibility of reality created by God as shown in human society:

Passion for equality blinds the utopian to the fact that society as a whole, is based on inequality among men in two respects: the inventor, the innovator, the exceptional man creates something new and insures continuous progress; the others emulate his work or merely improve their own lot by benefitting from his creativity. Now, to deny to this exceptional man the extra compensation . . . is to extirpate his inventiveness. The sorry state of socialist regimes shows that no amount of officially stimulated collective enthusiasm for the artificially defined common good is a substitute for individual incentive and reward. It is significant that in Communist societies "capitalist" advantages are granted

to the few on whom rest the regime's spectacular achievements, such as space technology and aircraft production.<sup>22</sup>

Elsewhere Molnar points to the pervading unreality or anti-reality of utopian thought:

When the utopian writers deal with work, health, leisure, life expectancy, war, crimes, culture, administration, finances, judges and so on, it is as if their words were uttered by an automaton with no conception of real life. The reader has the uncomfortable feeling of walking in a dream-land of abstractions, surrounded by lifeless objects . . .<sup>23</sup>

In practice, too, as the experience of Nazism, Communism, and also of socialist empires like ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt and China, or the Incas amply proves,<sup>24</sup> egalitarian utopianism reduces real flesh-and-blood individual men, women and children to less than human cogs in the monolithic state machinery. As Molnar rightly says, the utopian, while believing that he can compensate for man's finiteness and the world's flaws by building a new, collective society "succeeds only in depriving the individual of his limited freedom and, therefore, of the value of his action."<sup>25</sup> In eliminating the Creator God of the Bible, man, the being created in God's own image and likeness is also abolished, and all this, ironically, in the name of ideologies promising man, or collective mankind, mastery of nature and being god himself. Finally and ominously, Molnar correctly points out that "the trend [toward a one-world collectivist, God- and man-denying utopian government] has been unmistakable for a long time now [written 1967!]: the mechanism is in place; small, concrete decisions are made daily; only the theoretical measures are still discussed."<sup>26</sup>

We do well to come to grips with the premises and goals of utopian thought and practice. We need to understand that it makes little difference whether we are confronted with pantheist-religious or atheist-materialist movements; the two are but the twin blades of the pincers in which the perennial rebellion against God as sovereign Creator, which began with the serpent in Eden, seeks to crush us. Our answer must be to cleave more firmly than ever to our Creator Who established true reality by His unchanging, eternal Word, Who created us men uniquely in His own image and likeness, redeemed us from sin by His Son Jesus Christ, and Who holds us and all things and events in His hands. Nothing can come to pass without His will, and the timing is His as well. Reality itself in its fixed traits bears witness to the Creator, and exposes all utopian schemes as delusions. Biblical creation is the foundation of all Christian doctrine. To preach and defend it is to be in the front line of the perennial war between God's people and rebels against God who would be gods themselves. Because our God is Lord of all things, and because Christ is our Advocate and God the Holy Spirit our Intercessor, we also have the mighty weapon and ever-availing comfort of prayer. Let us then boldly occupy and win others to the Lord of hosts, the Maker of true reality and the true Healer from sin and death as we await His promised and hence sure and certain Coming Again in glory.



## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Thomas Molnar, *Utopia: The Perennial Heresy* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), p. 9 (hereafter cited as Molnar, *Utopia*).
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38
- <sup>5</sup> Vladimir E. Alexandrov, Andrei Bely (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 104-115. Also see Andrei Bely, *St. Petersburg* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., Second Printing 1959), especially p. 229
- <sup>6</sup> B. F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1971), pp. 200-201. See also C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan, Fourth Printing 1968), especially Chapter 3, pp. 67-91
- <sup>7</sup> Molnar, *Utopia*, p. 46
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45, p. 46
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140-141
- <sup>17</sup> Igor Shafarevich, *The Socialist Phenomenon* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), especially pp. 194-201
- <sup>18</sup> Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), especially Appendix, pp. 321-378
- <sup>19</sup> These writings are well surveyed in Shafarevich, *The Socialist Phenomenon*, pp. 80-120. Also see H. Van Riessen, *The Society of the Future* (Philadelphia, PA: The Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., n.d. [probably 1952]), Chapter 3, "Utopias," pp. 38-67.
- <sup>20</sup> This information is found in Martin Green, *Tolstoy and Gandhi, Men of Peace* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), pp. 97ff. This book is very friendly toward Tolstoy, Gandhi and the "New Life" movement.
- <sup>21</sup> Alan Moorehead, *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Bantam Books, November 1959), p. 81
- <sup>22</sup> Molnar, *Utopia*, p. 153
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230
- <sup>24</sup> See Shafarevich, *The Socialist Phenomenon*, pp. 132-189
- <sup>25</sup> Molnar, *Utopia*, p. 237
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146

# The Impact of Christianity Upon Kievan Russia

Ellen Myers

There are special, blessed moments of joy in the study of history. They occur when we meet in the distant past, unexpectedly and in awe, a people and a spirit to which we find ourselves related in fundamental kinship and faith. As a Christian believer in the Bible as God's inerrant self-revelation, and hence in biblical creation, I found such kinship and common faith with the people of Kievan Russia (eleventh and twelfth century A.D.) within their first generations after conversion to Christ (ca. 988 A.D.).

I am greatly drawn, for example, to Kievan church architecture. These clusters of whitewashed or wooden buildings with their narrow window slits, their curved roofs and their helmet-shaped domes embody for me the earth-bound, homely, humble and awkward, yet also "vertical," other-worldly, joyful and reverent communion of man with the Triune God of the Bible which we call Christian worship. The warmth, variety, "irregularity" so to call it, and vitality of the *personhood* of our God, and also of each uniquely created human being and uniquely created *national* personality (a recurring theme in Russian literature to our own day) is irrepressibly evident. For example, Kiev's Hagia Sophia cathedral, built 1036-46,

appears to rise like some great natural growth . . . the Kievan Hagia Sophia's accord with its setting is the earliest example of the irresistible effect which the Russian environment and Russian taste exercised over the foreign architects and artists who found employment there . . . even the fully formed artists produced from the start works which . . . differ completely from everything that these artists had created in their native lands before going to Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The multitude of churches built in Kiev within a few decades after the country's conversion (Thietmar of Merseburg who visited Kiev in 1018 A.D. said their number ran to almost four hundred)<sup>2</sup> shows the eagerness of princes and people "not just to profess the faith but to testify in deeds their devotion to the living God . . . not for decorative effect, but for Christian witness."<sup>3</sup> Yet the "decorative effect" — the splendor and beauty of church worship — is everywhere sought after, from cathedral to the Russian peasant's icon corner in his poor *izba* (peasant hut). This splendor and beauty actually was the decisive factor in prince Vladimir's, and hence Kievan Russia's, adoption of Byzantine Christianity in the late 980s. "We went on to Greece," Vladimir's envoys sent out to examine various religions told him, "and the Greeks

led us to the edifices where they worship their God, and we knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty . . . We know only that God dwells there among men . . ."

God dwelling among men — here, I believe, we see the fundamental faith and reality of Christian blessedness motivating Kievan Russia. The emphasis in communal worship lay on making God's person and Real presence visible and touchable. "The same desire to see spiritual truth in tangible form"<sup>5</sup> is embodied in Kievan Russia's icons or paintings of Christ, His blessed mother, and the saints. Protestant Christians rightly fear and proscribe the idolatry incipient in man-made images of holy things and human "saints." Yet among a people converted but recently from serving pagan "nature gods," as were eleventh-century Kievans, their Christian art including icons probably did an indispensable service of Christian nurture. We must remember that "there were no complete versions of the Bible, let alone independent theological syntheses, produced in early Russia."<sup>6</sup> Some early Kievan art nurtures and even converts human hearts and minds in our own time. What Christian, what student of the Bible can look at the early twelfth-century icon of the *Virgin of Vladimir* and not be touched by Mary's tenderness toward her Holy Child Jesus? Is not the lesson at hand — that we, too, should thus tenderly care for Jesus conceived and growing in our hearts after we have been visited by the Holy Ghost and overshadowed by the power of the Highest (Luke 1:35)?

Tenderness is one prominent strand of Kievan Russian Christianity; another such strand is kenoticism, or humility. We already encounter it in Russia's first canonized saints, the princes Boris and Gleb, who refused to take up arms against their elder brother Sviatopolk and were put to death for their non-resistance in 1015. This was "the first instance in Eastern and Western medieval ecclesiastic tradition of the imitation of Christ as a humble martyr dying for the sins of men."<sup>7</sup> This humility is also an outstanding trait in the lives of St. Antonius, the founder, and St. Theodosius, the first abbot, of the Crypt Monastery, founded near Kiev in the eleventh century. Monk Nestor, Theodosius' biographer, tells us repeatedly how Theodosius spoke and acted "with humility." A monastic novice was called a "poslushnik" (obedient listener),<sup>8</sup> a reminder that humility was to be his greatest virtue.<sup>9</sup>

The people of Kiev, after having newly come to Christ and having been inspired by the vision of God dwelling among men to worship Him in splendor and humility in "right praise" ("pravoslavie" — the Russian word for orthodoxy), also excelled in civilization and education. As a matter of fact they were further advanced in these two respects than the Western European countries of their time. The ruling princes of Kiev intermarried with the ruling houses of Western Europe.<sup>10</sup> After the English king Harold Godwinson was killed in the battle of Hastings in 1066, his family took refuge at the court of Kiev. Prince Vladimir took the children of the best families, and sent them to schools for instruction in book learning shortly after his conversion. We are told



that by the time of Vladimir's son Yaroslav (1019-1054) there were already numerous schools, hospitals, and libraries.

Despite the physical hardships of long, deadly cold winters, immense wild forests, and the rigors of subduing the northern land in an attempt to wrest a living from it, the people loved this hard and seemingly inhospitable land as their "mother." In their closeness to "mother earth" or to the Volga River as their "native mother," Kievan as well as modern Russians maintain man's ties to all God's creation so often mentioned in the Bible. These ties are expressly acknowledged in the liturgy of the Russian Orthodox Church from the very earliest recorded times at Kiev, as shown, for instance, in the beautiful *Sermon on the First Sunday After Easter* by Bishop Cyril of Turov.<sup>11</sup> We also find awareness of these ties in Kievan Russian epics and heroic tales. An example is the conversation of prince Igor with the Donets River in *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*,<sup>12</sup> written about Prince Igor's unfortunate campaign against the heathen Kumans in 1185 A.D. We find this awareness in the *Ode on the Downfall of the Russian Land*, written between 1237 and 1245 and lamenting the conquest of Russia by the Mongols. Its opening lines are not about battles or "human events," but rather about the land itself:

O Russian land, brightest of the bright,  
most beautifully adorned,  
thou art marvelous to us, with thy many beauties.  
Marvelous are thy numerous lakes,  
thy rivers and venerated springs,  
steep mountains, high hills,  
oak forests, beautiful fields,  
many beasts and countless birds. . . .<sup>13</sup>

Only after this eloquent praise of the land itself and its plant and animal inhabitants does the thirteenth-century author speak of the great cities, wonderful villages, and monastery gardens, honorable boyars and countless lords, Christian churches and stern princes. Thou, Russian land, art rich in wealth and in the Orthodox Christian Faith.<sup>14</sup>

Kievan Russia was eventually invaded and conquered by the Tatars under the heirs of Ghengis Khan in 1237-40. There had been earlier raids upon Kievan territory in the south by various Mongol tribes such as the Pechenegs and the Kumans (or Polovtsians). But the disunity among Kievan Russian princes after the death of Vladimir Monomakh in 1125 A.D. was perhaps the deepest contributory cause for Kievan Russia's shortness of existence. Frequent warnings against this disunity occur in the chronicles, epics and stories of the time, and we may suppose that the people writing these warnings did what they could. It was not enough.

Seen across many centuries, Kievan Russia seems like a lost paradise where the people were one integrated whole with their land, their rivers, their animals — wild animals almost as much as tamed ones

—and their God Who dwelled among them as Creator, Sustainer and Lord.

### FOOTNOTES

Tamara Talbot Rice, *A Concise History of Russian Art* (Praeger, New York 1963, Fourth Printing 1974), pp. 18-19

*Ibid.* p. 26

<sup>1</sup> James H. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe* (Random House, New York, First Vintage Books Edition, September 1970), p. 11

<sup>2</sup> Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales* (E. P. Dutton, New York 1963, Second Edition 1974), p. 67

<sup>3</sup> Billington, *op cit.* p. 9

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7

<sup>5</sup> Zenkovsky, *op cit.* p. 37

<sup>6</sup> Billington, *op cit.* p. 8

<sup>7</sup> "Humility towards unjust and godless oppression has been the unbiblical reverse of godly humility

<sup>8</sup> Zenkovsky, *op cit.* p. 5

<sup>9</sup> Zenkovsky, *op cit.*, pp. 90-92

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169-190; cited passage is on p. 188

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197

Editor's Note: In 1988 Russia will celebrate the 1000th anniversary of her conversion to Christ

# Does Humanism Offer Hope?

*J. C. Vorfeld*

In 1973, over 200 world leaders endorsed Humanist Manifesto II, which includes the following excerpts: "We have virtually conquered the planet, explored the moon, overcome the natural limits of travel and communication: we stand at the dawn of a new age; ready to move farther into space and perhaps inhabit other planets . . . Traditional moral codes and newer irrational cults both fail to meet the pressing needs of today and tomorrow. False 'theologies of hope' and messianic ideologies . . . separate rather than unite peoples . . . We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race . . . we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."

One of man's highest aims is to unravel the mysteries of the universe. Humanism, a non-theistic religion affirming that man is capable of such achievements as self-fulfillment and ethical conduct without recourse to supernaturalism, has, through the centuries — in its various forms — ignored, suppressed, and disdained the written and Living Word of God.

Believers aren't exempt from the subtly-attractive influences of Humanism; many of us came from its ranks. One of the main reasons a number of us defected is that it offers little hope for the present, and no hope for the future.

Psalms 118 reflects the outcome of what must have been an intense struggle to overcome the influences of Humanism. One key to the writer's background is the phrase, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man." Did this blunt statement come because he'd failed to solve his problems by using his own strength, knowledge, and intelligence, or that of others? How far down the Road of Independence had he gone before he knew in Whom was his salvation?

Throughout this psalm revealing God's grace and power, the writer repeatedly, lovingly, and creatively sings God's highest praises. He challenges the reader to call on God in times of trial, to trust Him when tormented by mental, physical, and spiritual attack, and to know that when he's pushed down, the Lord will pull him up: through depression, despair, and desperation. Did he learn this, as do so many of us, the hard way?



"All nations surrounded me; in the name of the Lord I will surely cut them off." Here the psalmist reaches out beyond his humanity, willing to affirm God's omnipotence. Are we, perhaps, to understand from this that while many humans have legitimate positions of power and authority, there is not one whose might can begin to compare with the power in the name of the Lord, when used by a Believer in a time of crisis?

"The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation." The Hebrew and Greek words for salvation are yeshuah, yesha, moshaoth, soteria, and soterion. Their meanings: safety, deliverance, soundness, ease, and welfare. Many good people have been instrumental in seeing that others had safety, deliverance, soundness, ease, and welfare, but no human other than Jesus has ever been safety, deliverance, soundness, ease, and welfare. Some have tried. All have failed. Only the Lord, declares the writer, is yeshuah.

Finally, he declares that the Lord is God, drawing to a dynamic conclusion by using the same phrase with which he began this revealing psalm: "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting."

While Psalm 118 points to the Christian's hope, in what can the average Humanist hope? Humanist Manifesto II encourages people to strive for "the good life, here and now." It asserts that critical intelligence, infused with a sense of human caring, is the best method humanity has for resolving problems. Humanist Manifesto II, while clearly written by people concerned about the human condition, doesn't offer any hope for life after death. Rather, it states that there is "no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the ways that our lives have influenced others in our culture."

Conversely, the Scriptures offer humanity not only Someone to walk with, through tough and tranquil times, but a creative, fulfilling, spectacular eternity with the Creator.

Praise the Lord for a psalmist who lived to proclaim the nature and ways of Almighty God, and what He has done for us now and in the future. The Humanist has little to hope for beyond achievement, high intelligence, and good connections. For the Christian, there is a future without end. For this reason we treasure the hope given us, a priceless gift from a gracious Heavenly Father, one who patiently calls all people, including Humanists, to take the free gift of the water of life: Jesus.

# BOOK REVIEW

*Idols of Our Time* by Bob Goudzwaard, foreword by Howard Snyder, Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984, 115 pp., \$4.95.

In the Western world Christian and Jewish social analysts are rediscovering the Biblical analysis of idols. In England J.A. Walters' *A Long Way From Home*, in South Africa the Institute for Reformational Studies' *Ideologies Stryd in Suider-Afrika*, in Latin America Pablo Richards' *The Idols of Death and the God of Life*, in Rome John Paul II's attacks on the idols of secularized life and in North America Herbert Schlossberg's *Idols for Destruction* and Cynthia Ozick's *The Messiah of Stockholm* are recent applications of the Biblical framework of idol analysis to contemporary life. From the Netherlands economist and noted left politician Bob Goudzwaard has now also analyzed *Idols of Our Time* (published in Dutch in 1981) Although his book is more a "tract for our times," Goudzwaard thoughtfully deals with major contemporary social, cultural and political issues within a sophisticated analytical framework.

According to Goudzwaard serious and sudden material, social, or political deprivations motivate individuals to goal-oriented action to overcome these impoverishments. Indeed, under severe pressures people may become hysterically obsessed with their relief. The goal to ameliorate the situation can become all-compelling, inflexible, and a justification of any means. Whenever an "end" indiscriminately justifies every "means," an ideology (a substitute religion) has arisen. For example, the poverty before the Industrial Revolution instilled an obsessive fear of hunger and desire for prosperity, which became the ideology of prosperity. Even upon the arrival of relative prosperity the ideology's hold is so strong on its adherents that they cannot say, "Enough!"

Ideology, the obsessive end, causes, justifies and powers an obsession with the creation of means; this is what Goudzwaard calls the creation of idols. People desire an end so much that they will create, consecrate and turn themselves over to any means, any idol, that promises to relieve their suffering and attain their end (of prosperity, peace, etc.). The creators of these means (technology, revolutionary theory and practice, arms, etc.) become dependent on them for hope and continued protection and fear their loss.

To the extent that certain means enable people to achieve their goals, these means develop an even tighter grip on the human imagination and spirit. Then the means' overriding importance dictates that their users adjust themselves to the means rather than vice-versa. Hypnotized by their idols (the means), people's focus and awareness is narrowed to finding hope and perspective only within the limits of the idolatrous means. The creators thus become like their inanimate

means: deaf, dumb and mute. The human creator becomes a technologist, a bomb-thrower or a capitalist.

The ideology-idolatry process creates new problems and successive crises. Obviously, for example, domination by inanimate means such as technology causes their human users to feel dehumanized. Further, the goals of prosperity, peace, etc. recede or expand so that they can never be obtained. Or the ideologies and their idols may clash; for example, increasing military expenditure to buy security may decrease prosperity. Most worrisome, the various ideologies and idols may team up to form a monstrous and eventually destructive pantheon. For example, the prosperity ideology may help justify increased expenditures for weapons, and the security ideology may benefit from an ever expanding economy.

In the face of strains and crises the domination of the means over their creators is so strong that the only "rational" solution imaginable is increased use of the means. The additional technology becomes not a useful possible solution to a problem but *the* solution. If the invocation of these gods fail, people may lapse into fatalism or become extremely introverted.

The most singular features of Goudzwaard's framework are the assertions that ideologies and, derivatively, idols arise out of extreme need, that ideologies are obsessive ends and that idols are run-away means.

One would have thought that as a Christian Goudzwaard would have started with men's rejections of God instead of material, social, or political needs as the origins of idolatries. He starts off half-excusing the sinner and obscuring the prior idolatrous intent and the (fallen) condition of the will. Were there extreme or sharp deprivations in Eden?

As J.A. Walters asserts in *All You Love is Need* (IVP, 1986), "need" is a slippery term hard to define. In its worst contemporary manifestation "need" excuses whatever one desires ("I need more health, wealth, happiness and mint-flavored toothpaste, so I need to get divorced")

Assuming an objectively defined extreme need, ideologies do not necessarily or even often arise. People uncomplainingly may undergo terrible hardship for long periods of time. For example, in his classic *Anatomy of Revolution* Crane Brinton maintained that the revolutions and their ideologies he studied developed during improving or, in some cases, relatively good economic, political and social circumstances. Brinton, Lenski, Gurr and others maintained that most revolutions arise when, among other things, expectations rise faster than improving conditions fulfill. However, Goudzwaard tends to ignore the subjective factors of expectations, definitions of the situation and changing beliefs which often play as important role as any "objective" deprivation. Indeed, I wonder whether ideological movements cannot arise because of sharp or extremely good conditions, a positive ideology. Goudzwaard seems to limit the effects of positive conditions to reinforcing already existing ideologies, that is the first success of



ideologically created means reinforces the belief in the ideology and its means.

After the rejection of God, people are thrown into a needy world. I have tested Goudzwaard's conceptual scheme, revised in light of my criticisms, and have found it very useful in analyzing situations of stress, particularly personal stress. Goudzwaard's scheme seems to portray accurately the scurrying, even hysterical, activity of men as they seek protection and domination in the "godless," hostile world that they in fact had imagined and created. The more men feel trapped in a loveless world, the more hysterical they may become.

Further, I also agree that even though idols as replacements of God are ends as well as means, the idols dependent relation on their creators does tend to degrade them to mere means. So, in the ancient Near East people went from idol to idol seeking good rains for the end of prosperity, protection from sickness toward the end of healthiness and victory in battle toward the end of domination or freedom. In Nineteenth century China villagers would angrily try to force their City God to provide rains during a drought by dragging his icon out into the sun for a taste of its heat or whip it in the public square. During the same time, the Chinese secret society Triad (a tong association) initiation likewise included utilitarian purpose

For what purpose have you come hither?

To worship the Heaven and Earth Gods.

Why do you wish to worship the Heaven and Earth Gods?

In order to drive out the Ch'ing (Dynasty and the bad)

and to restore the Ming (Dynasty and the light).

This reviewer would characterize Goudzwaard's book as having a number of useful ideas, as interesting and as moderately leftist. This book also has some problems for the unwary.

With thanks and acknowledgment to Dr. John Elliot Dutch journalist and scholar Mr. David Langley, esteemed editor, although the views are strictly my own

— *Reviewed by Tony Carnes*

# Entering Through Faith's Door

Mary Tenbrink

*The Lord will guard our going out and coming in from this day forth and  
forevermore*

Psalms 121:8

A Ministry of Truths awakens.  
More than words does this Love speak  
for he hath bought our sweet release.  
More precious than gold is His faith,  
given to us by His free grace

Protected, He walks beside us!  
Thus beginnings begin  
as the Pearl of Great Price  
releases Thy Spirit's Light

Our fruits begin to multiply,  
a gentle kiss by Thee  
Sacred journey forevermore  
just for entering through faith's door  
Praise to Jesus Christ our Lord.

# Living Stone

*Mary Tenbrink*

Hand in Holy Hand  
along the Spiritual road.  
I am elated with His Word  
as He breathes, walks, loves  
just like me.  
Perfectly knitted together,  
His Spirit in mind.

He tells me,  
living for the Lord  
is no easy task,  
for earthen vessels  
will suffer greatly.  
Many will come  
hating truth and loving lies.

But come unto Me  
the Lamb Who was slain.  
He listens in heart  
then answers in Thy Father's will  
He chips away  
fitted to His glorious image.  
A living stone.



# Causality as an Argument for God's Existence

*Diane Powell*

In our observations we note that the world around us possesses the qualities of space, time, energy, complexity, life, and, most importantly, persons with a moral nature. Unless these properties were self-caused they must have been caused by an outside agent. According to the causality argument these properties can only exist because of a First Cause who is by nature both similar to, and not limited by, the property. For example, God qualifies as the source of time by being timeless, or eternal, since that involves similarity of nature as well as the lack of constraint.

According to the scriptures, all men have an innate sense of the reality of God.

... because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it to them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse. (Rom. 1:19-21)

Men have both an inner sense of God and the testimony of the created world around them. However, because men have rejected God, they have chosen to disregard this testimony. (Rom. 1:18)

A fascination with causality is inherent in man's being. Man asks, "Why?" He questions the meaning of his own existence. We can explain man's rational, intelligent and creative nature only by virtue of his being created by a God who possesses these characteristics. From the very first verse of Genesis God begins to provide answers to the questions man is asking concerning his own identity and his relationship to God.

What happens when man uses his rational mind to consider the evidences for believing in God? Francis Bacon, who is credited with formulating the scientific method, wrote in his *Essay on Atheism*:

A little philosophy inclineth a man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth man's mind back to religion, for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further, but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to providence and Deity.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. John Cleveland Cothran, a mathematician and chemist, quotes Lord Kelvin of England, one of the world's greatest physicists, who said, "If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to believe in God."<sup>2</sup>

Without a Creator God there is no satisfactory explanation for the origin of matter itself. Darwin was without an answer and spoke of "The mystery of the beginning of all things" which he referred to as, "insoluble."<sup>3</sup>

### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Monsma, John Clover (Ed.). "Physical Evidences of God." *The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1958, p. 59-60.
- <sup>2</sup> "The Inescapable Conclusion," Monsma, p. 37-41.
- <sup>3</sup> Klotz, John W. "Darwin's Religious Beliefs," *Creation Research Quarterly*, Vol. 21, March 1985, p. 169.

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